

SITUATION REPORT NO. 38
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: May 7, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: An asthmatic patient was in serious condition at a Minot hospital after participating in flood cleanup efforts in Grand Forks. To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: The N.D. Department of Transportation (N.D. DOT) has closed N.D. Highway 57 after wave action caused Devils Lake flood waters to overtop the roadway. Devils Lake at Creel Bay was at 1,440.15 feet on May 7; the elevation of N.D. Highway 57 is 1,440.5 feet. Devils Lake has been rising one-tenth of one foot a day, the result of record inflows. The National Weather Service expects the lake to rise to 1,443.5 or 1,444 feet by July. Flows into the lake from Mauvais Coulee are backing up and threatening the city of Churchs Ferry.

Although a 50-mile stretch of I-29 from Grand Forks north to Manvel has been reopened by the N.D. DOT, the interstate remains closed from Manvel to the Canadian border. Two locations along the interstate are inundated by flood water.

A Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) of more than 8,000 North Dakota homes indicated that 519 homes, 53 mobile homes and 73 apartment homes have been destroyed by flood waters. The PDA, conducted by the American Red Cross, also showed that 701 homes, 69 mobile homes and 175 apartments sustained major damage. Inspectors report that 5,959 homes, 166 mobile homes and 497 apartments received minor damage.

The Red River of the North at Wahpeton has receded to only 0.13 feet above its 11-foot flood stage. Farther downstream, the Red River at Pembina was at 52.45 feet on May 7, where it has remained steady for the past two days. The river crested at 54.94 feet on April 26; flood stage is 42 feet. The river at Drayton measured 41.95 feet, a 0.47 foot drop during the past 48 hours. The river crested at Drayton at 45.55 feet on April 25; flood stage is 32 feet. Upstream in Grand Forks, the river level was at 40.27 feet, a 1.2-foot drop during the past 48 hours. The river at Grand Forks had crested at 54.2 feet on April 22; flood stage is 28 feet.

The Grand Forks Health Department reports that 12 people will be treated for possible exposure to Hepatitis A. Health authorities believe a senior citizen who stayed at the Grand Forks Air Force Base may have contracted hepatitis.

Approximately 7,500 Grand Forks customers remained without electrical power and 6,550 without natural gas service as of May 5, as inspectors conduct structural, electrical and gas safety inspections of homes.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that 8,000 homes in Grand Forks and 120 in Fargo may require removal of hazardous materials.

Officials are monitoring the James River in Jamestown because of record combined releases amounting to 1,750 cubic feet per second (cfs) from the Jamestown and Pipestem Dams, an amount higher than previous years. The Jamestown Reservoir has remained at 1,445.6 feet since April 29, which is nearly one foot higher than its record level set in 1996. When the Jamestown Dam drops below 1,445.4 feet, releases will be gradually reduced. Allowing for local runoff, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been using a river gauge at I-94 to maintain a target flow throughout town of 1,800 cfs.

Residents of Streeter have been coping for more than two weeks with overland flooding, which has caused part of the city's sanitary sewer system to fail. Approximately eight homeowners report that the sewer system has backed up into their basements.

In Sargent County, water restrictions remain in place in the city of Cogswell, where the lift station is inundated by flood waters and is only accessible by boat. In Forman, flood waters are receding from a lift station and a trailer park, in which homes have been inaccessible since mid-April. Flood waters have also caused furnace, parking lot and foundation damage at Sargent Central School.

Snow melt is contributing to overland flooding in Cavalier County, where rural residents report inaccessible roads, failure of sanitary drain fields and the possibility of contaminated water supplies. Road crews report more than 250 flood-damaged road sites.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The National Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) plans to hold a special meeting on May 9 in Fargo to coordinate member agencies' response to the Upper Midwest floods. The meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn. VOAD representatives from North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota have been invited to attend.

Residents of Strasburg have donated \$1,000 in proceeds from a fundraiser to the North

Dakota Community Foundation's '97 Flood Relief Fund.

Approximately 400 evacuees stayed at Red Cross shelters on May 5. To date, 5,057 people have sought shelter from the Red Cross. The relief agency provided 39,254 meals on May 5 and 332,407 meals to date.

In Cavalier County, 105 volunteers are assisting people displaced by Red River flooding. Approximately 550 displaced persons have been housed in the area. Volunteer groups are serving lunch and dinner to the evacuees.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The N.D. National Guard places its preliminary costs for "Operation Good Neighbor" at nearly \$1.5 million. The operation, conducted in response to the winter storm and flooding disaster, encompassed snow removal work, restoration of emergency power, water purification, evacuations, dike construction, security and removal of animal carcasses from waterways. Approximately 100 National Guard members launched "Operation Good Neighbor" on March 26. To date, more than 1,800 Air and Army Guard members have volunteered for duty. The Army National Guard flight crews have logged more than 275 hours, and aviators assisted with the air evacuation of 328 people from East Grand Forks. As of May 6, the National Guard forces had 40 missions in progress and one mission pending. To date, members have completed 257 missions.

Governor Schafer has assigned the State Health Officer to coordinate the disaster and recovery responses by the N.D. Department of Health and Department of Human Services.

More than 29,300 North Dakotans have registered damages with the National Teleregistration Center. These applications are under review by the Small Business Administration (SBA), the Disaster Housing Program and the Individual and Family Grant Program. To date, 14,135 North Dakotans have received \$10,126,283 through the Disaster Housing Program. The Individual and Family Grant Program staff is reviewing 13,509 applications. To date, the program has distributed \$12,612 to 11 North Dakotans for assistance with serious and necessary expenses. SBA has issued 23,187 low-interest loan applications to flood victims. To date, 1,512 applications have been returned and 123 have been approved, amounting to \$1.5 million in loans.

Job Service North Dakota employees have approved 872 claims for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) for a total of \$166,768 in benefits. The agency is reviewing 1,891 DUA claims.

Animal carcass disposal efforts should conclude this week as field crews finish work in the Red River Valley. The N.D. Department of Agriculture reports that field crews have handled more than 10 million pounds worth of dead animals, burying 12,000 carcasses and pulling 850 animals from waterways. The removal program is coordinated through the Agriculture Disaster Response Center, established by the Department of Agriculture.

The Department of Health reported that 28 percent of Grand Forks' restaurants, bars, grocery stores and gas stations had reopened as of May 5. The Grand Forks Public Health Department was scheduled to open the Law Enforcement Center on May 6.

The North Dakota Housing Finance Agency has granted a forbearance on flood victims' May

1 payment, waiving late charges and not indicating a delinquent status on credit reports.

The city of Jamestown donated sandbags to Courtenay to prevent an overflowing slough from pouring into the city's sewage lagoon. A temporary trench has been dug to divert the slough water away from the lagoon. Sandbags were also used to plug a hole in the dike where sewage was escaping into a nearby pond.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>". The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The N.D. Department of Agriculture also posts flood-related information on its home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/agr>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

Douglas C. Friez, State Director